

Statistics Weekly

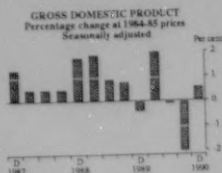
Thursday, 28 March 1991

The week in statistics ...

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There will be no issue of *Statistics Weekly* in the Easter week, the next edition will be released on Thursday, 11 April 1991.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician



The latest National Accounts figures

Income and expenditure-based GDP

Constant price gross domestic product (GDP) rose 0.6 per cent in December quarter 1990.

Despite the small rise in December quarter, GDP was 1.8 per cent lower in the six months ended December 1990 than in the previous six months.

Major features of the expenditure aggregates this quarter include weak private and public final expenditures, a significantly smaller rundown in private non-farm stocks than in the September quarter, higher exports and a fall in imports.

MAIN NATIONAL ACCOUNTS AGGREGATES
DECEMBER QUARTER 1990
Seasonally adjusted estimates at average 1984-85 prices
Percentage change

	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Final consumption expenditure —		
Private	0.0	1.9
Government	-0.7	3.8
Gross fixed capital expenditure	-4.9	-9.0
Gross national expenditure	-1.3	-3.0
Exports of goods and services	4.5	15.9
Imports of goods and services	-5.0	-4.3
Gross domestic product	0.6	0.6
Gross farm product	2.2	12.3
Gross non-farm product	0.6	0.2

Private non-farm stocks declined by \$357 million in constant price terms in December quarter following a decline of \$1014 million in September quarter. Consequently, private non-farm stocks made a positive contribution to growth in GDP in the December quarter of 1.0 percentage points.

Exports of goods and services rose 4.5 per cent in the December quarter making a positive contribution to growth of 0.9 percentage points. On the other hand, imports of goods and services declined by 5.0 per cent in December quarter, but made a positive contribution to growth in GDP of 1.1 percentage points.

Private final consumption expenditure remained flat in December quarter, with real falls in retail sales of goods being offset by rises in expenditure on services. Government final consumption expenditure was also weak, falling 0.7 per cent in the quarter.

Private gross fixed capital expenditure declined by 2.7 per cent in December quarter, the sixth consecutive fall in this aggregate. Public gross fixed capital expenditure was down 11.1 per cent, partly as a consequence of lower expenditure on aircraft by Commonwealth enterprises.

Continued ...

Initial estimates show that Australia's terms of trade fell 5.7 per cent in December quarter and that it is now 11.6 per cent below its peak recorded in March quarter 1989. The imports to sales ratio fell to 0.120 from 0.122 in September quarter. The stocks to sales ratio at 0.551 remained close to its lowest recorded level of 0.550 (March quarter 1989 and September quarter 1990).

In current price seasonally adjusted terms, wages, salaries and supplements increased by 0.3 per cent, reflecting a decline in employment and a modest rise in average earnings. The gross operating surplus of private corporate trading enterprises rose 5.1 per cent following falls in the previous three quarters.

(Unless otherwise indicated these comments are based on seasonally adjusted constant price estimates.) For further information, order the publication *Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure (5206.0)*, or contact Paul Curran on (06) 252 6708.

Production-based GDP

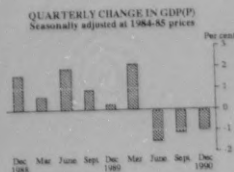
The estimate of GDP referred to above was derived using the income approach. This estimate has traditionally been the most prominent and commonly used estimate of GDP. Another way of deriving an estimate of GDP is by using the production approach, to obtain GDP(P). Conceptually, the two approaches should yield the same result, but in practice they usually differ, mainly because different data sources are used.

Constant price GDP(P) fell by 1.0 per cent in December quarter 1990, its third successive quarterly decline. Of the twelve industry divisions contributing to GDP(P), activity increased in only four during the December quarter. Electricity, gas and water (3.5%) and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (2.0%) recorded the largest increases.

GROSS PRODUCT, DECEMBER QUARTER 1990
Seasonally adjusted estimates at average 1984-85 prices

	Gross product (\$ million)	Percentage change from	
		Previous quarter	Corresponding quarter of previous year
Manufacturing	10784	-2.0	-6.3
Wholesale and retail trade	9836	-1.2	-4.3
Community services	7552	-1.0	0.3
Finance, property and business services	7339	-2.8	-5.0
Mining	4745	-1.0	7.8
Construction	4067	-3.5	-9.8
Transport and storage	3418	0.8	3.1
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2595	2.0	10.8
Recreation, personal and other services	2544	-0.7	-0.4
Electricity, gas and water	2499	3.5	3.9
Public administration and defence	2319	-0.9	0.9
Communication	1787	0.8	2.9
Other (ownership of dwellings, import duties, etc.)	4831	1.3	3.4
Gross domestic product (GDP(P))	64316	-1.0	-1.4

Continued ...



Activity in the farm sector of this latter industry division continued its strong growth over the past year and a half. However, farm incomes have continued to fall because of the large falls in the prices of major agricultural commodities.

The most significant declines in activity in the quarter were in construction (-3.5%), finance, property and business services (-2.8%) and manufacturing (-2.0%). All three industry divisions posted their third consecutive quarterly decline. Despite strong growth in gold production, mining gross product at constant prices declined by 1.0 per cent in the quarter, mainly due to falls in black coal and, oil and gas production.

(Unless otherwise indicated these comments are based on seasonally adjusted constant price estimates). For further information, order the publication Australian National Accounts: Gross Product, Employment and Hours Worked (5222.0), or contact Alan Tryde on (06) 252 6801.

Industrial production slump continues

The constant price value of industrial production continued to slide in the December quarter 1990 in seasonally adjusted terms, with a fall of 1.0 per cent following larger falls (of 2.7% and 2.2%) in the two previous quarters.

The 'industrial sector' covers mining, manufacturing, and utilities (electricity, gas and water). The industrial production index, dominated by movements in the manufacturing industry, is now 1.6 per cent lower than in the December quarter 1989.

The seasonally adjusted index for the mining industry fell by 1.0 per cent in the December quarter following a fall of 3.6 per cent in the previous quarter. However, the index remains 7.7 per cent higher than in the December quarter 1989, due to strong growth in the March and June 1990 quarters.

The manufacturing production index fell by 2.0 per cent, following falls of 5.5 per cent and 2.0 per cent in the June and September 1990 quarters respectively. Since the December quarter 1989 the index has fallen by 6.3 per cent, offsetting the rise in the mining industry.

Five of the twelve industry subdivisions of manufacturing recorded increased production for the December quarter. The largest increase was an 18.5 per cent rise in the textiles industry, largely offsetting the 19.3 per cent fall in the previous quarter. The largest falls (paper etc printing and publishing down 8.7%, and transport equipment down 5.4%) were more significant than the rises, resulting in an overall decline for total manufacturing.

Almost all component manufacturing industries recorded falls from the December quarter 1989, the largest being transport equipment (down 21.8%, to the lowest level since the quarterly series began in September 1976) and non-metallic mineral products (down 15.9%). The only significant growth was in the food, beverages and tobacco industry (up 5.9%).

The utilities sector recorded a rise of 3.6 per cent in the December quarter 1990, after three quarters of relatively level production. The trend series has recorded continuous growth since 1982-83.

For further information, order the publication Quarterly Indexes of Industrial Production, Australia (8125.0) or contact Alan Tryde on (06) 252 6801.

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION INDEX
Seasonally adjusted at constant prices
1984-85 = 100

TOTAL INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION



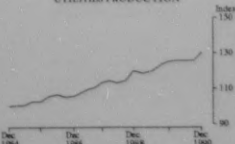
MINING PRODUCTION



MANUFACTURING PRODUCTION



UTILITIES PRODUCTION



Prices of manufactures and exports fall again in January

The price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry fell by 0.8 per cent in January 1991 following a 0.6 per cent decrease in December 1990, while export prices decreased by 1.0 per cent in January following a 2.0 per cent decrease in December.

Both indexes were significantly affected by decreases in prices of alumina, sugar and crude petroleum, with the export index also affected by lower prices for wheat. The export index decrease was partly offset by increases in petroleum gases and non-crude petroleum products.

In the period January 1990 to January 1991 the All Manufacturing Industry Index rose by 5.1 per cent, while the export index fell by 2.0 per cent.

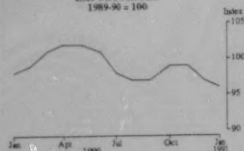
EXPORT PRICES, JANUARY 1991 Percentage change

Commodity	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Mineral products	0.9	13.3
Products of chemicals or allied industries	-7.4	6.4
Motor vehicles, aircraft and vessels	0.0	1.0
Machinery and mechanical appliances	0.0	-1.0
Live animals and animal products	0.0	-1.0
Base metals	-3.2	-2.2
Gold, diamonds and coin	0.0	-3.8
Prepared foodstuffs	-6.4	-15.4
Wool and cotton fibres	0.0	-17.2
Vegetable products	-6.6	-29.0
<i>All exports</i>	-1.0	-2.0

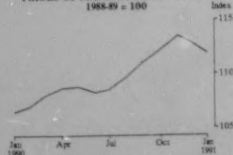
PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS JANUARY 1991 Percentage change

Manufacturing sector	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Petroleum products	-7.4	33.6
Chemical products	1.7	6.1
Fabricated metal products	0.0	5.6
Clothing and footwear	0.4	4.1
Transport equipment	0.2	4.0
Other industrial machinery and equipment	0.1	3.0
Basic metal products	-2.0	2.8
Food, beverages and tobacco	-0.6	2.0
<i>Total manufacturing</i>	-0.8	5.1

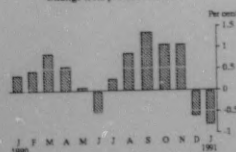
EXPORT PRICES
1989-90 = 100



PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS
1988-89 = 100



Change from previous month

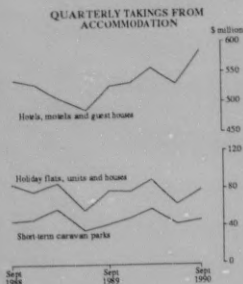
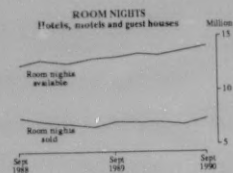


Tourist accommodation: increase in supply outstrips demand

There were 7.2 per cent more rooms available in Australian hotels, motels and guest houses in the September quarter 1990 than in the same quarter of 1989.

However, because room nights sold increased by only 4.2 per cent, over the same period, the room occupancy rate fell from 54.1 to 52.8 per cent.

Guest arrivals increased only marginally by 1.6 per cent, with increases being recorded in all States and Territories except Victoria and Western Australia. Average length of stay increased marginally from 1.9 to 2.0 days.



TOURIST ACCOMMODATION
Hotels, motels and guest houses

	September quarter		Change
	1989	1990	
Room nights available ('000)	13,139	14,086	7.2%
Room nights sold ('000)	7,090	7,387	4.2%
Room occupancy rate (%)	54.1	52.8	-2.4%
Takings from accommodation (\$m)	527	585	11.0%

Takings from accommodation increased by 11.0 per cent from \$527 million to \$585 million, while the average takings per room night sold rose by 6.5 per cent from \$74 to \$79. During this same period, the Consumer Price Index: all groups, increased by 6.0 per cent.

For further information, order the publication *Tourist Accommodation, Australia* (8635.0), or contact John Alexander on (07) 222 6215.

A guide to major ABS classifications

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has produced a guide to its major statistical classifications to assist users of our products.

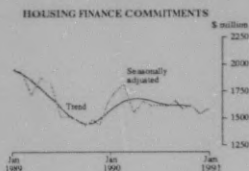
The guide provides an overview of the major ABS classifications and assists users wishing to gain a broad understanding of these classifications. It will aid in the interpretation and analysis of statistics provided by the ABS.

The classifications in the guide relate to geographical areas of Australia, industry production, and trade commodities, institutional sectors, government finance, occupations, diseases and crime.

In addition to providing a ready description of the nature of these key classifications, the guide gives details of ABS products that are available for use in association with each of them.

For further information, order the publication *A Guide to Major ABS Classifications* (1291.0), or contact John Billing on (06) 252 7326.

Housing finance see-saw is up — but trend still down



Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for January 1991 were \$1,591.7 million, an increase of \$57.9 million (3.8%) over December 1990 and a decrease of \$38.9 million (2.4%) on January 1990.

The increase in January followed a fall in December, continuing the see-sawing of the seasonally adjusted series in every month since March 1990.

The trend estimate declined marginally in October 1990 (the latest month for which estimates are available), down less than 1 per cent on the September 1990 figure. The decline in the trend estimates has continued since April 1990.

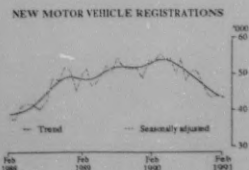
Both banks and permanent building societies recorded increases in January 1991 compared with December 1990, up 5.8 per cent and 30.8 per cent respectively; on the other hand 'other lenders' were down 24.7 per cent.

HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS, JANUARY 1990
Seasonally adjusted

Purpose of commitment	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Construction of dwellings	289.9	0.5	-0.2
Purchase of newly erected dwellings	101.0	0.4	4.5
Purchase of established dwellings	1,200.8	4.9	-3.4
Total	1,591.7	3.8	-2.4

As the above table shows, only 'purchase of established dwellings' showed any significant increase (4.9%) in January 1991 compared with December 1990.

For further information, order the publication *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0)*, or contact Derek Pike on (06) 252 7129.



Vehicle registrations trend still down

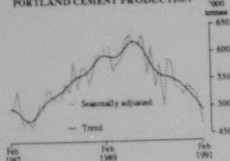
The trend estimate for new motor vehicle registrations fell for the tenth consecutive month with a 2.0 per cent drop from January to February 1991. While there was an increase of 8.4 per cent to 39,405 vehicles in unadjusted registrations, in seasonally adjusted terms, February registrations fell marginally to 43,550 vehicles, a decline of 0.9 per cent from January.

The trend estimate for cars and station wagons fell by 1.8 per cent from January to February with other vehicles falling by 2.7 per cent.

Registrations in February were more than 18 per cent below those in February 1990 (in original, seasonally adjusted and trend series).

For further information, order the publication *Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, Preliminary (9301.0)*, or contact Kevin Yeaton on (06) 252 6255.

PORTLAND CEMENT PRODUCTION



Manufacturing in brief ...

Readers are again reminded that production of manufacturing commodities can vary quite significantly on a month-to-month basis, even after seasonal adjustment.

The 'previous year' column is a rather more reliable guide, but even it should be treated with some caution unless read in conjunction with the complete month-by-month data presented in each monthly publication.

MANUFACTURING PRODUCTION, FEBRUARY 1991
Seasonally adjusted, percentage change

Product	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Cotton yarn	-47.1	34.3
Blooms and slabs	-0.4	33.5
Domestic refrigerators	-14.5	28.5
Chocolate based confectionery	34.0	13.5
Woven cotton fabric (including towelling)	-11.2	12.6
Iron and steel ingots or other primary forms	14.4	7.3
Television sets	-12.1	3.5
Electricity	-2.3	1.8
Domestic clothes washing machines	26.3	-0.7
Gas available for issue through mains	-1.4	-1.0
Beer	0.3	-1.4
Other confectionery	-10.3	-1.4
Electric motors	-19.1	-1.7
Woven wool fabric (including blanketing)	3.2	-3.5
Woven man-made fibre fabric	-3.2	-3.6
Basic iron, spiegeleisen and sponge iron	1.8	-6.0
Textile floor coverings	-31.6	-8.9
Portland cement	-3.8	-13.0
Wool yarn	-19.6	-20.9
Petrol-rotary type lawn mowers	-41.9	-22.3
Cars and station wagons	-28.2	-23.5
Clay bricks	-8.2	-30.8
Sulphuric acid; oleum	-12.2	-41.8
Motor vehicles for goods and materials	-36.1	-44.3

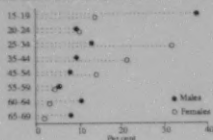
For further information, order the publication *Manufacturing Production, Australia*, Preliminary (8301.0), or contact Kevin Squair on (06) 252 5558.

Just over a million potential workers

There are more than one million Australians who wanted to work but are not officially in the labour force.

In an Australian Bureau of Statistics survey conducted in September 1990, an estimated 3,550,100 people, or 29 per cent of the civilian population aged 15 to 69, were categorised as not in the labour force.

PERSONS WITH MARGINAL ATTACHMENT TO THE LABOUR FORCE, SEPTEMBER 1990



About 21 per cent of these, or 752,500 persons, had 'marginal attachment' to the labour force (persons neither employed nor unemployed who nevertheless reported taking some active steps to find work, or who would be available to start work soon if a suitable job was offered). Even though the remaining 310,000 people said that they wanted to work, they also said that they would not be able to start work in the few weeks following the survey.

An estimated 35 per cent of females classed as marginally attached to the labour force gave reasons related to childcare for not being in a position to look for work. Some 61 per cent of males and 29 per cent of females gave personal reasons as the main reason for not actively looking for work, — of these 'attending an educational institution' was the major component (124,100).

Females accounted for 69 per cent of all persons not in the labour force and of those some 72 per cent gave 'home duties/childcare' as their main activity, as opposed to only 5 per cent of males. Some 38 per cent of males and 7 per cent of females reported 'retired/voluntarily inactive' as their main activity. An estimated 271,600 persons (8%) stated they were not in the labour force due to illness, injury, disability or handicap.

The survey estimated 63,800 discouraged jobseekers. These were people who were available to start work soon, but were not actively looking for work because they believed either employers would consider them too young or too old; or language difficulties and the lack of qualifications/skill would prevent them being selected for a job. As in previous surveys, the 55 to 64 years age group contained the greatest number of discouraged jobseekers (23%).

The total number of people not in the labour force, and the proportion classified as 'marginally attached' has not changed significantly since the survey was last conducted in 1989.

For further information, order the publication *Persons Not In The Labour Force*, Australia (6220.0), or contact Mirella Wilson on (06) 252 6661.

This week in brief ...

□ Wine sales

Total sales of wine decreased markedly in January. The trend estimate of 24.5 million litres for total wine sales is a decrease of 1.5 per cent on December 1990. In seasonally adjusted terms, total wine sales in January at 23.1 million litres, represents a decrease of 6.7 per cent on December 1990.

Source: *Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, January 1991* (8504.0).

□ Mineral exploration

Exploration expenditure for the September quarter 1990 fell by 11.4 per cent (\$18.5 million) from the June quarter level of \$162.1 million. The decrease can be principally attributed to a \$22.4 million (25.2%) fall in gold exploration expenditure, offset by a \$4.5 million (14.6%) increase in expenditure on exploration for base metals.

Source: *Actual and Expected Private Mineral Exploration, Australia, September Quarter 1990* (8412.0).

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

ABS Central Office

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ABS State Offices

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Vic. (03) 615 7000
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Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon
Editor
Statistics Weekly
(06) 252 6104

Statistics Weekly
28 March 1991

All the week's releases: 20 to 26 March

General

Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., March 1991 (1304.0; \$19.00)
Statistics Weekly, 21 March 1991 (*318.0; \$4.00)
Tasmanian Statistical Indicators, March 1991 (1303.6; \$9.00)
Northern Territory at a Glance, 1991 (1304.7; free)

Census of Population and Housing

The Overseas Born in Vic., 1986 (2503.2; \$24.95) — *new issue*

Demography

Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., October 1990 (3401.0; \$6.00)
Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., September Qtr 1990 (3402.0; \$13.50)
Age and Sex Distribution of the Estimated Resident Population of Statistical Local Areas, NSW, 1989 (3209.1; \$12.50)

Social statistics

Compendium of Demographic and Social Statistics, WA, 1991 (4103.5; \$25.00) — *final issue*
Higher Courts: Criminal Matters, SA, 1989 (4502.4; \$10.00)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure, December Qtr 1990 (5206.0; \$20.00)
Australian National Accounts: Gross Product, Employment and Hours Worked, December Qtr 1990 (5222.0; \$9.00)
Australian National Accounts: Quarterly Data on Floppy Disk, December Qtr 1990 (5228.0; \$86.50)
Exports and Imports, Aust.: Trade with Selected Countries and Major Country Groups, December Qtr 1990 (5422.0; \$16.25)
Imports, Aust., Monthly Summary Tables, January 1991 (5433.0; \$9.00)
Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., January 1991 (5609.0; \$10.00)

Labour statistics and prices

Export Price Index, Aust., January 1991 (6405.0; \$7.50)
Price Indexes of Copper Materials, Aust., February 1991 (6410.0; \$5.00)
Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Aust., January 1991 (6412.0; \$10.00)
Price Indexes of Materials Used in Coal Mining, Aust., January 1991 (6415.0; \$10.00)
House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities, December Qtr 1990 (6416.0; \$25.00)

Agriculture

Agriculture, WA, 1989-90 (7113.5; \$14.00)
Fruit, SA, 1989-90 (7322.4; \$14.00)

Secondary industry and distribution

Quarterly Indexes of Industrial Production, Aust., December Qtr 1990 (8125.0; \$10.00)
Manufacturing Production, Aust., February 1991, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.00)
Manufacturing Production, Aust., Transport Equipment, January 1991 (8363.0; \$4.50)
Manufacturing Production, Aust. Energy Products, January 1991 (8368.0; \$4.50)
Actual and Expected Private Mineral Exploration, Aust., September Qtr 1990 (8412.0; \$7.50)
Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, January 1991 (8504.0; \$10.00)
Tourist Accommodation, WA, September Qtr 1990 (8635.5; \$10.00)
Forest Products, Tas., December Qtr 1990 (8203.6; \$3.30)

Transport

Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., February 1991, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.00)
Motor Vehicle Registrations, Aust., 1989-90 (9304.0; \$15.00)
Motor Vehicle Registrations, Vic., February 1991 (9303.2; \$10.00)
Motor Vehicle Registrations, Qld, February 1991 (9303.3; \$10.00)
Motor Vehicle Registrations, WA, February 1991 (9303.5; \$7.00)

Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 9 April 1991

March

- 27** Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, January 1991 (6411.0; \$10.00)
- 28** Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, January 1991 (6407.0; \$10.00)
- Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, January 1991 (6408.0; \$7.50)

April

- 3** Building Approvals, Australia, February 1991 (8731.0; \$5.50)
- 4** Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, November 1990 (6302.0; \$10.00)
- 5** Job Vacancies and Overtime, Australia, February 1991 (6354.0; \$11.50)
- 8** Balance of Payments, Australia, February 1991 (5301.0; \$15.00)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to
26 March 1991



Statistics Weekly
28 March 1991

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Sept. qtr 90)*	-0.9	-10.9	5.4	11.2	-17.9	37.2	n.a.	n.a.	-3.4
Retail turnover (Jan. 91) (trend estimate)	3.4	-2.8	4.2	9.1	2.4	6.1	n.a.	9.3	2.6
New motor vehicle registrations (Feb. 91)†	-14.4	-25.6	-15.2	-20.6	-18.9	-24.3	-34.8	11.4	-18.3
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Jan. 91)	0.6	-11.8	8.2	17.8	-33.3	-12.9	20.2	-1.9	-3.7
Value of total building work done (Sept. qtr 90)	-7.2	-7.7	-14.0	-6.3	-25.8	-18.8	-1.0	-9.0	-10.6
Employed persons (February 91)*	0.6	-2.8	-1.6	0.9	-1.1	-0.2	-6.4	2.2	-0.8
Capital city consumer price index (Dec. qtr 90)	6.4	7.4	6.2	7.8	7.4	6.1	7.1	6.8	6.9
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (August 90)	5.4	7.0	6.9	7.3	7.9	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.4
Population (June 90)	1.0	1.4	2.6	1.0	2.5	1.2	0.6	2.3	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (Sept. qtr 90)	3.2	0.1	6.5	1.8	0.8	23.5	7.4	20.9	4.2

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT

Key national indicators - consolidated to 26 March 1991

		Period	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National production						
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m Dec. qtr 90	101,082	95,247	1.3	3.4
	— 1984-85 prices	"	70,031	64,725	0.6	0.6
Industrial activity						
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m Dec. qtr 90	7,305	6,612	3.2	-10.6
	— 1984-85 prices	"	5,542	5,021	3.6	-10.3
Expected new capital expenditure	— current prices	" Three months to Dec. 90	8,311	n.a.	n.a.	-5.7
Retail turnover	— current prices	" January 91	6,980	7,242	2.5	3.7
	— 1984-85 prices	" Dec. qtr 90	16,480	14,620	-1.6	-1.6
New motor vehicle registrations		no. February 91	39,405	43,550	-0.9	-18.3
Dwelling unit approvals		no. January 91	9,189	10,784	10.1	-5.9
Value of all building approvals		\$m	1,501	1,668	11.4	-40.2
Value of total building work done	— current prices	" Sept. qtr 90	7,214	6,951	-3.7	-10.6
	— 1984-85 prices	"	4,556	4,390	-4.2	-14.4
Manufacturers' sales	— current prices	" Dec. qtr 90	36,754	35,064	1.0	-1.0
	— 1984-85 prices	"	25,318	24,154	0.0	-3.0
Expected manufacturers' sales		" Six months to June 91	70,139	n.a.	n.a.	-1.8
Labour						
Employed persons		'000 February 91	7,739.3	7,792.5	-0.4	-0.8
Unemployment rate †	%	"	9.5	8.7	0.4	2.5
Participation rate †	%	"	63.8	63.6	-0.1	-0.1
Job vacancies		'000 November 90	34.1	35.4	-27.8	-45.6
Average weekly overtime per employee	hours	"	1.3	1.3	-1.9	-16.2
Prices, profits and wages						
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0	Dec. qtr 90	214.5	n.a.	2.7	6.9
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries (c)	1984-85 = 100.0	December 90	128.8	n.a.	-3.7	9.0
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0	January 91	111.9	n.a.	-0.8	5.1
Company profits before income tax	\$m	Dec. qtr 90	4,640	3,911	15.9	4.8
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$	November 90	554.40	n.a.	2.5	7.3
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)						
90-day bank bills †	% per annum	February 91	11.65	n.a.	-0.20	-4.60
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	11.55	n.a.	0.05	-1.75
Balance of payments						
Exports of merchandise	\$m	January 91	4,139	4,260	1.3	9.7
Imports of merchandise	"	"	4,252	4,156	2.0	9.4
Balance on merchandise trade (c)	"	"	-113	104	n.a.	n.a.
Balance of goods and services (c)	"	"	-332	-130	61.5	87.5
Balance on current account (c)	"	"	-1,863	-1,582	10.0	29.5
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	Dec. qtr 90	n.a.	97.9	-3.6	-9.3
Foreign investment						
Net foreign debt	\$m	30 Dec. 90	130,771	n.a.	1.9	6.7
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	172,363	n.a.	0.4	5.6
Exchange rates (monthly average)						
US\$	per SA	January 91	0.7792	n.a.	1.2	-0.4
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0	"	57.6	n.a.	1.6	-4.6
Other indicators						
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million	June 90	17.1	n.a.	0.3	1.5
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000	October 90	191	188	-1.4	12.9

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 27 March 1991.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 10). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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